

NAVY DRUG SCREENING LABORATORY SAN DIEGO

Sentinel

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Ensuring warfighter readiness by deterring illegal drug use

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NDSL San Diego provides forensic drug testing, expert testimony, consultation, education, and methods development.

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From the CO's Desk



Cmdr. Lisa Kennemur
Commanding Officer
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Greetings!

Thank you for taking time to read our newsletter. As this is the first edition under my command, I would like to discuss the mission and services of the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory (NDSL), San Diego.

The mission of the NDSL San Diego is to provide scientifically

valid and legally defensible test results for drugs of abuse identified in urine specimens submitted as part of the Department of the Navy's Drug Abuse Prevention Program, and to perform consultation, education, and expert witness duties, as needed or directed by higher authority.

We invite and encourage Command Leadership, Judge Advocate General Officers, and Urinalysis Program Coordinators to attend an informational brief and tour at our Laboratory.

This newsletter is intended for your benefit. We will be addressing topics we believe are of interest and are relevant. If you have time to read only one section, it should be the section highlighting discrepancies noted in specimen submissions (**Attention to Detail**). This section will be helpful in avoiding errors that could affect your command's ability to successfully prosecute a Sailor or Marine for drug abuse.

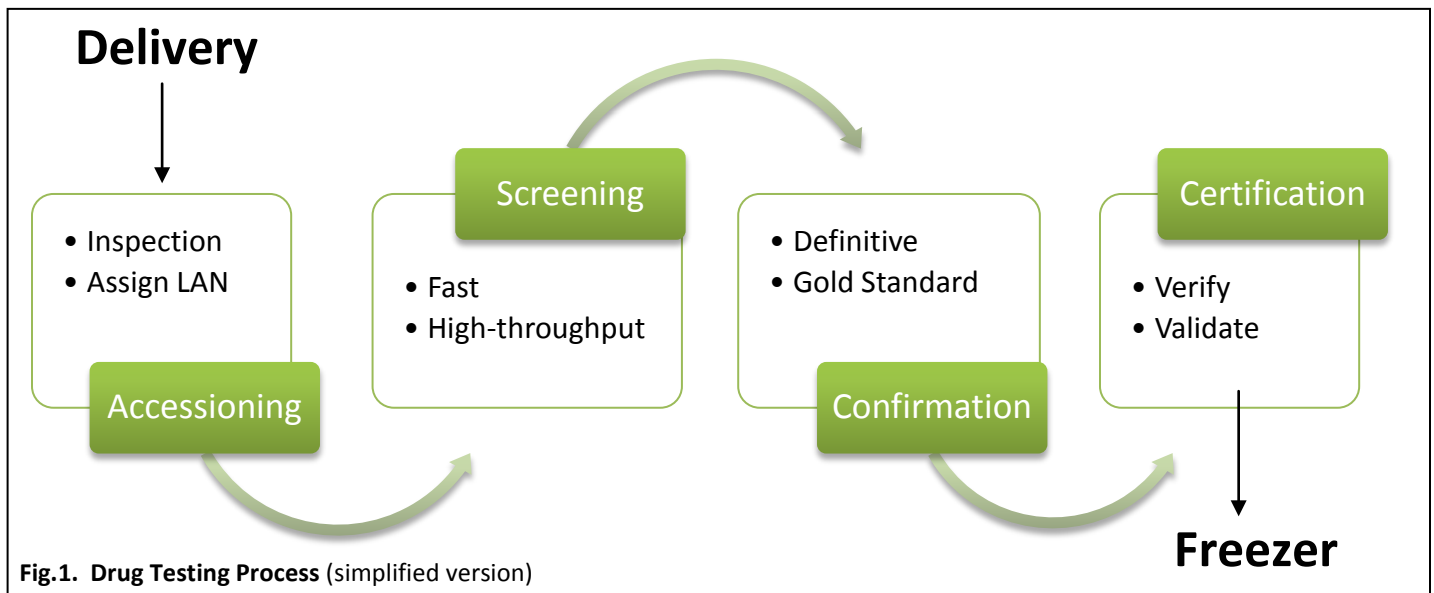
The Drug Testing Process Explained

Navy Drug Screening Laboratory (NDSL) San Diego is one of six military labs in the country able to test urine specimens collected from Service members.

The NDSL mission is to support force readiness and force health protection by deterring illegal drug use.

Urine specimens suspected of containing steroids and various other drugs, such as Spice, are sent to other reference labs for testing.

In Screening, a small portion of the urine specimen, termed an aliquot, is tested on an instrument that can



The lab routinely tests an average of 80,000 specimens a month for amphetamines, methamphetamines, marijuana, cocaine, Ecstasy, and opiates, including oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, codeine, morphine and heroin.

The lab also pulse tests at least 10 percent of specimens for benzodiazepines, such as Xanax and Valium.

Urine specimens are shipped to the lab by authorized couriers or are hand-delivered by local commands.

In Accessioning, the technicians verify the integrity of the urine specimen and ensure that the information on the specimen bottle matches the entries on the collection form (DD Form 2624). There are many controls in place to ensure the proper handling and storage of each specimen.

The technician assigns each specimen a unique laboratory accession number (LAN) for the purpose of maintaining its identity throughout the testing and results reporting process.

rapidly analyze a high volume of specimens. It uses a fast, inexpensive immunological assay similar to a home pregnancy test.

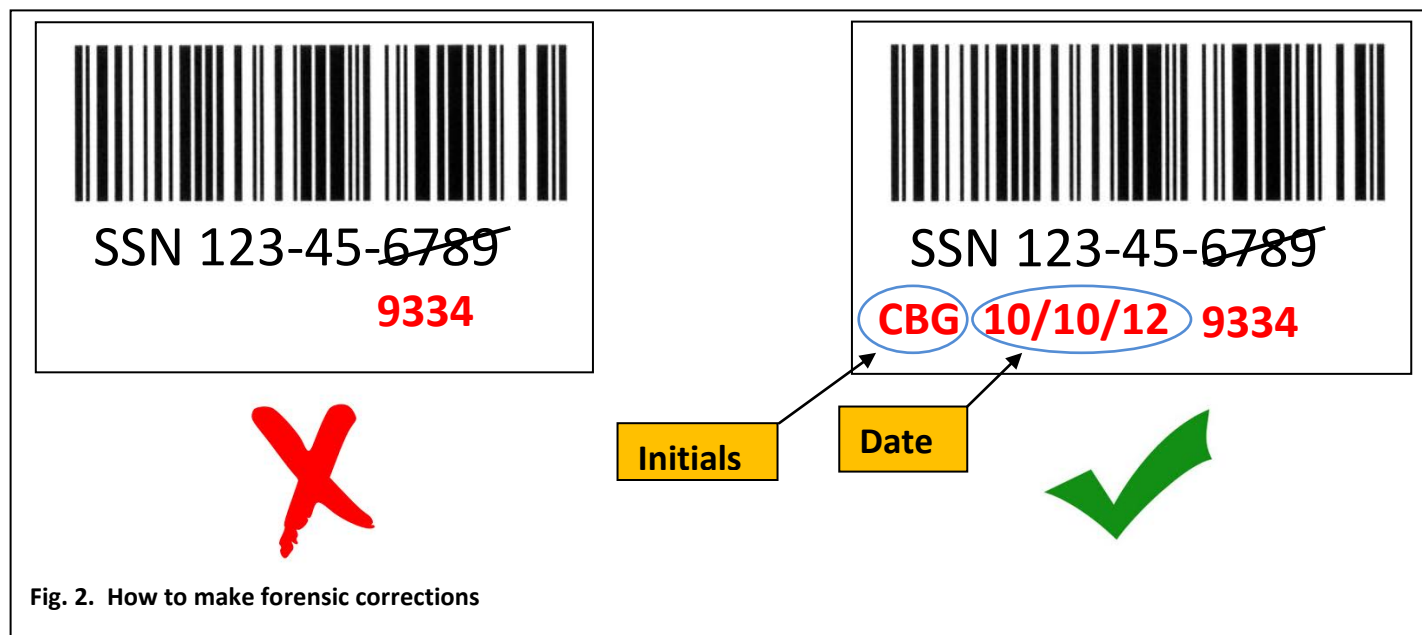
Presumptively-positive specimens are re-tested in Confirmation using a definitive and more technical method that is the gold standard for drug testing.

This sophisticated instrument can identify the drug and measure the level of the drug or its break down (metabolic) products in the urine specimen.

In Certification, all the data from the initial screening and confirmation tests for a positive result are reviewed, and the information on the urine bottle is verified. This validation process includes a review by four to five subject matter experts to ensure the quality of the results.

In the end, the specimen that tests positive is stored in a freezer as evidence for a minimum of one year.

Attention to Detail: Forensic Corrections



Errors made in the documentation of the collection and transport of urine specimens for drug testing have serious consequences.

One of the most common errors involves corrections made to information on specimen labels and the chain of custody forms (DD Form 2624). These are all considered legal or forensic documents that are integral in the administrative processing or prosecution of drug abusers.

Everyone involved in the drug testing process is responsible for knowing how to make forensic corrections.

A forensic correction is one that does not obliterate or make un-readable the original information and documents the change. For this reason, we:

1. **Do not** make entries in pencil, which can be erased.
2. **Do not** write over letters or numbers to change them to something else.
3. **Do not** "scribble" through incorrect information so that it cannot be read.
4. **Do not** use any type of correction fluid or tape such as "Liquid Paper" or "WhiteOut."

Forensic corrections are made as follows:

1. Draw a **single line** through the incorrect information.
2. Write next to it the correct information.
3. Write the date of the correction.
4. The person making the correction then initials the correction.

The Urinalysis Program Coordinator (UPC) is responsible for confirming that the data on the collection form (DD2624) and on the specimen label match.

Errors on the chain of custody form can draw into question the integrity of the collection process and the validity of a positive drug test.

In the end, an innocent person may be incorrectly assigned a positive drug test because the wrong social security number was used. Or worse, drug abusers who put their health and the lives of others at risk may get a pass because of improperly made corrections.

Questions? Reach a subject matter expert here:

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The Truth About Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine use can be addictive, unpredictable, and lethal. This drug is a very toxic stimulant associated with serious health conditions, including damage to the integumentary, cardiovascular, immune, and central nervous systems.

Methamphetamine (aka meth, speed, chalk, ice, crystal, glass) can be smoked, snorted, injected, or taken orally.

Methamphetamine can cause a variety of cardiovascular problems. These include rapid heart rate, irregular heartbeat, increased blood pressure, and irreversible stroke-producing damage to small blood vessels in the brain. Hyperthermia (elevated body temperature) and convulsions can occur with methamphetamine overdoses, and if not treated immediately, can result in death.

Signs of methamphetamine use include dilated pupils, sweating and flushed skin, dry mouth, tremors, increased energy or hyperactivity, and clouded mental functioning. Other symptoms include decreased appetite, alertness, aggression, paranoia, delusions, depression, memory loss, and irritability. Psychotic symptoms can persist for months or years after use has ceased.

Chronic methamphetamine abuse can cause inflammation of the heart lining, progressive social and occupational deterioration, and "Meth mouth". "Meth mouth" is caused by smoking methamphetamine that has very caustic ingredients causing very aggressive erosion of tooth enamel.

Resources

For drug prevention information visit DEA's website:
for parents: www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com
for teens: www.JustThinkTwice.com

For an informational video and poster regarding the health risks and dangers of the synthetic amphetamine known as "bath salts" and other designer drugs:
www.med.navy.mil/Pages/spice.aspx

Drug Myth Busters #001

Myth: C4 Extreme, a workout supplement manufactured by Cellucor and available at a variety of bodybuilding and nutritional shops (including on-base and GNC), can cause d-amphetamine/d-methamphetamine positive urine drug tests.

FACT: Although a panel on the packaging warns against using the product if you are drug tested in the military or professional sports, the manufacturer's listed ingredients do not include any substance that would test positive on a standard urine drug test, nor any substance that would metabolize in the body to any substance tested for at the NDSL. As a general rule, nothing purchased over-the-counter in the U.S. will cause a positive drug test result at the laboratory.

Myth: It is safer to use prescription drugs to get "high" rather than using illicit drugs, because they're prescribed by a doctor or dentist.

FACT: Any use of prescription drugs without a doctor's recommendation, can be just as dangerous as using other illicit drugs. Improper use can have serious health effects—including addiction and overdose.

To request Expert Witness Support

Email: ndslsd-scientificsupport@med.navy.mil



Community Outreach

NDSL San Diego Raises More Than \$14,000 for CFC Charities

12/14/2012 – SAN DIEGO, Ca. –The Navy Drug Screening Laboratory (NDSL) San Diego announced today a command “best-ever” Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) donation total for 2012.

NDSL staff members donated generously to the charities of their choice with total contributions of \$14,005.

Overall donations exceeded the 2012 goal of \$10,765 by \$3,240 and established a new record for NDSL San Diego.

The kick-off event to this successful 2012 CFC fundraising effort included presentations by members of two local charities, Make-A-Wish Foundation of San Diego and Paws'itive Teams - Service Dogs for San Diegans.

Cmdr. Lisa Kennemur, NDSL San Diego Commanding Officer expressed high praise and gratitude for her staff's generosity:

“This is really an awesome accomplishment for a great cause,” said Kennemur. “I'm very proud of your generosity; we will have a new record to shoot for next year.”

According to Mr. Charlie Carey, Director CFC, supporting charities is much more than getting a good feeling at the holiday time:

“Every one of us will use a charity during our lifetime,” said Carey. “Charities provide real programs and services that help us, help our families, and support making our neighborhoods and communities better places to live.”

“Your pledge makes more of a difference than you can imagine,” said Ms. Carol Davis, Co-founder and Service Dog Program Director Paws'itive Teams.



Navy Drug Screening Lab San Diego, California

The CFC was designed and is currently run by federal employees ensuring a safe, convenient and simple way to support any of the more than 2,500 charities listed world-wide.

Each charity is carefully screened so every donor knows that their donation will go directly to support program services, not overhead.

For more information about the CFC, visit:
<http://www.socalcfc.org>.

For more information about the three Navy Drug Screening Laboratories, visit:
<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/navy-drug-screening-labs/Pages/default.aspx>

By The Numbers

1.5 million The number of American children that are homeless each year.

100,000 The number of military veterans that leading U.S. companies are planning to hire by 2020.

10,013 The number of homeless people in San Diego.

2,200 The number of deaths every day in the United States due to heart disease.

1 The number of babies born every hour in the United States who are addicted to opiate drugs.